



Request for Applications



RFA # 001-ITCCDF-2022

TITLE: Salary Supplement Program for Infant & Toddler Teachers

FUNDING AGENCY: NC DHHS/Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

ISSUE DATE: February 14, 2022

RECEIPT DEADLINE: Applications, subject to the following conditions, must be received no later than **5:00 pm, March 25, 2022.**

EMAIL an electronic PDF of your application to the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education via this email: DCDEE.Contracts.Unit.RFA@dhhs.nc.gov.

The signature of an authorized official is required on the application face sheet. An electronic signature or an electronic scanned copy of the signed application face sheet will be accepted. **Only electronic application submissions via email will be accepted, i.e., do not mail, fax, or deliver copies of the application to DCDEE's physical or mailing address.**

INTENT TO APPLY: Eligible agencies and/or organizations interested in applying for this RFA are encouraged to notify DCDEE of their intent to apply via the following link, <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CMRNC6G> no later than **5:00 pm, February 23, 2022.** Agencies are **not** required to notify of their intent to respond to this RFA; this information is requested to assist DCDEE in planning.

BIDDER'S CONFERENCE: DCDEE plans on hosting a Bidder's Conference for this RFA on **February 15, 2022 at 2:30 pm.** During this time an overview of the RFA will be presented along with an opportunity for Q&A. Click the link below to join the session:
<https://ncgov.webex.com/ncgov/onstage/g.php?MTID=e62fbdbd666b87c57dd9a7b756c28c729>

DIRECT ALL INQUIRIES concerning this Request for Applications in writing to:
Theresa Roedersheimer, Infant Toddler Policy Consultant
Email address: DCDEE.Contracts.Unit.RFA@dhhs.nc.gov

IMPORTANT NOTE: Questions concerning the specifications, or any information contained within this Request for Applications (RFA) must be received no later than **5:00 pm, February 23, 2022.** All questions must be received in writing, via electronic mail to: DCDEE.Contracts.Unit.RFA@dhhs.nc.gov. Responses to all questions received by the deadline will be posted on the Division of Child Development and Early Education website <https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Whats-New> no later than **5:00 pm, February 25, 2022.**

ELIGIBILITY: This RFA is open to state agencies and universities, public and private nonprofit organizations with a current 501(c)(3) standing with knowledge of early childhood education (ECE) systems, effective policies, and practices at all levels of the ECE infrastructure, a demonstrated ability to develop and execute equity focused projects, and program design and evaluation expertise. Also experience in compensation/incentive planning and design as well as human resource solutions.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY: This RFA will be for a 3-year funding cycle for the following State Fiscal Years: 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025. Approximately \$4,000,000 will be available to support each funding year. One award will be funded through this announcement.

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) will determine the actual funding amount based on the proposed execution of the project and the utilization of funds as outlined in the successful applicant's proposal, pending funding availability.

Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Funding Source:

1. Funding Type	Discretionary
2. Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN)	2101NCCCDF
3. Federal Award Date (see § 200.39 Federal award date)	02/03/2021
4. Total Amount of the Federal Award (awarded to DCDEE)	\$133,621,971.00
5. Federal award project description, as required to be responsive to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA)	Child Care Development Fund - To make grants to States and Tribes to assist low-income families with child care and to: (1) Allow each State maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within State; (2) promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions on the child care that best suits their family's needs; (3) encourage States to provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care; (4) assist States to provide child care to parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance; and (5) assist States in implementing the health, safety, licensing, and registration standards established in State regulations
6. Name of Federal awarding agency, pass-through entity, and contact information for awarding official	Federal DHHS Office Administration for Children and Families Christopher Felton Grants Management Officer Christopher.felton@acf.hhs.gov 617-565-2443 NC DHHS/DCDEE

	333 Six Forks Road Raleigh, NC 27609
7. CFDA Number and Name; the pass-through entity must identify the dollar amount made available under each Federal award and the CFDA number at the time of disbursement	CFDA# 93.575 Child Care and Development Block Grant
8. Identification of whether the award is R&D	No

Federal Requirements on indirect cost rates and calculations according to 2 C.F.R. 200.414:

1. If your agency has or establishes a Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (FNIR), then the agency is not allowed to charge the “de minimis” rate of 10% (or some other amount) for indirect costs, as directed by 2 C.F.R. 200.414(f).
2. Agencies with an FNIR are required to charge their agreed upon rate for their indirect costs and include cost items as determined by the FNIR in their indirect costs.
3. Negotiation of indirect cost rates in excess of the “de minimis” rate of 10% are performed by the NC DHHS Office of the Controller, Cost Analysis and Administration section if funds are awarded to your agency:

Cost Analysis/Federal Financial Reporting/Administration
DHHS Office of the Controller
NC Department of Health and Human Services
1050 Umstead Dr
Raleigh, NC 27699-2019
Phone: 919-855-3696

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I. INTRODUCTION

A child's early years can have lifelong physical, cognitive, social, and emotional impacts. While positive experiences and environments can set a young child on a stronger developmental trajectory, traumatic experiences or environments during those formative years can have long-lasting, detrimental impacts. Early childhood experiences from birth to age 8 affect the development of the brain's architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. A strong foundation helps children develop the skills needed to become well-functioning adults.

Infants and toddlers thrive when they develop relationships and secure attachments with their families and child care providers. Relationships with children formed outside of the home are created in safe, predictable, and nurturing environments. High-quality child care environments empower young children to develop the skills to be emotionally secure, socially competent, and intellectually capable.

To support the youngest children's development, child care facilities need to move beyond the minimum standards and focus on components that can help children thrive to their fullest. Progress toward an equitable, efficient, and effective early childhood system requires preparation, tailored workplace supports, and adequate teacher compensation concurrently.

II. BACKGROUND

High quality programs provide the foundational platforms for young children to enter kindergarten equipped with the necessary tools for successful entry into the academic world. Examples of high-quality programs are those that follow comprehensive early learning standards and curricula, utilize appropriate child assessments, and employ a consistent well-prepared and diverse workforce. Research has shown that when children begin high quality early education programs early in life, there is the potential to improve developmental outcomes and close learning and opportunity gaps that typically form by the time a child reaches three years of age. Providing high quality care for infants and toddlers is a challenge for early care and education programs due to a lack of intensive coaching, mentoring, training and support for child care providers needed to meet infants' and toddlers' unique needs. Current and ongoing research on brain development indicates a relationship between culturally responsive caregiving and positive social, emotional, learning, and developmental outcomes for children. The Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) is the Lead Agency for North Carolina's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), "which is the primary Federal funding source devoted to providing low-income families who are working or participating in education or training activities with help paying for child care and improving the quality of child care for all children" (81 FR 67438). Reauthorization of the federal grant requires states to spend at least 3% of CCDF awards on activities to improve the quality of child care for infants and toddlers specifically (Pub. L. 113-186).

In February 2019, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) published its Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP). This plan established NCDHHS' vision that all

North Carolina children will get a healthy start and develop to their full potential in safe and nurturing families, schools, and communities. The ECAP centers on three themes: North Carolina's young children are healthy, will grow up safe and nurtured, and are well-supported to be learning and ready to succeed. It presents a bold vision, focusing on improving outcomes related to children's health, safety and well-being, and developmental and academic readiness. Part of making this work a reality is ensuring that there is a diverse qualified and supported workforce.

Low wages make it difficult to attract and sustain a diverse high-quality workforce who have obtained higher education status beyond child care credentials. As a result, low compensation will often lead to higher staff turnover. Evidence shows that when children are enrolled in child care programs where there is lower turnover and where providers earn higher wages, they spend more time engaged in positive interactions as well as culturally, developmentally, and age-appropriate activities with peers and teachers, which contributes to healthy development and school readiness.¹ According to the 2019 Early Care and Education Workforce Study, the average infant/toddler teacher wage is \$11 per hour.²

The purpose of this request for applications is to establish a statewide salary supplement program for the infant and toddler workforce that ensures diverse highly educated teachers receive a salary that is comparable to that of K-12 teachers. This supplemental compensation will encourage teachers to increase their education and enhance staff qualifications. Since teachers must remain employed at their child care program in order to remain eligible, staff retention and increased teacher education will lead to an overall increase in program quality.

DCDEE is seeking an entity that will:

1. Administer salary supplements to eligible teachers of licensed child care programs
2. Evaluate the effect salary supplements have on teacher performance, increased teacher education, teacher turnover rates, and program education level improvement

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The successful applicant will propose a thorough, detailed plan for establishing and managing a statewide salary supplement program providing salary supplements to full-time infant and toddler teachers employed in licensed child care programs and family child care providers caring for children birth to age 3 with a minimum of an [Infant Toddler Care Certificate \(C55290\)](#) or its equivalent.

Program Specifications

¹ <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/files/ece-low-compensation-undermines-quality-report-2016.pdf>

² https://www.childcareservices.org/wp-content/uploads/CCSA_2020_Statewide_WorkExecSum-FINAL-web.pdf

Salary supplements are to be provided to eligible teachers working in a classroom that serves infants and toddlers as defined by North Carolina Child Care Rules³. Teachers must work at licensed child care centers (CC), Family Child Care Home (FCCH) programs, or religious-sponsored child care programs. Because staff retention is one of the main outcomes of this program, teachers must remain employed at their child care program in order to remain eligible. Therefore, eligible participants cannot be receiving any other statewide salary supplement from programs such as WAGES. The successful applicant will outline other participant's eligibility criterion such as income wage caps and education equivalency, as well as determine a plan for maintaining said documentation. Lastly, the successful applicant will identify a system for managing a waitlist and determining participant prioritization.

Salary Supplement Scale

The successful applicant will formulate a salary supplement scale outlining the participant's education requirements and corresponding award amount.

1. Develop a tiered payment approach based on increased education lattice with justification of the methodology implemented.

Payment Process

The successful applicant will formulate a plan for processing and distributing payments directly to eligible participants.

1. Establish a system for record retention.
2. Determine a payment schedule and frequency.

Program Support

The successful applicant will develop a plan to provide consultation services to prospective and current participants.

1. Provide information on program policies and procedures.
2. Work with prospective applicants to determine if the participation in the program is the best fit for their situation (i.e., are there other programs available in the county).
3. Assist with transitioning participants from other salary supplement programs.
4. Assist teachers with preparing for program eligibility.
5. Assist child care program leaders with teacher income sustainability.

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https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Portals/0/documents/pdf/C/Chapter_9_Child_Care_Rules_October%2023%202020.pdf?ver=2020-10-30-130306-933

Outreach Activities

The successful applicant will devise a plan to conduct outreach activities to inform stakeholders of the salary supplement program.

1. Coordinate with programs that support the child care workforce such as local Smart Start agencies, Child Care Resource and Referral, universities, community colleges and advocacy organizations.
2. Establish a web-based presence for the program that explains the program and eligibility requirements.
3. Incorporate the use of translators to support participants with limited English proficiency, including print materials.

Performance Monitoring/Evaluation System

The successful applicant will develop a plan to establish performance monitoring at multiple levels of operations, including programmatic to participant levels. Data should be regularly reported, analyzed, and used for continuous quality improvement.

1. Establish a logic model with clear linkages to performance measures that guides the program's resources, activities, and intended outcomes.
2. Describe the diversity of population that will be served and develop ways to address geographic disparities.
3. Establish a basic manual for service delivery that includes standard operating procedures to ensure consistent delivery across a wide geographic area.
4. Define data and data collection methods with clear linkages to performance standard outcomes.
5. Determine a system of monitoring the program's performance to gauge the effectiveness in meeting program outcomes.
6. Identify a process for using data to identify program's strengths and needs.
 - a. Develop and implement plans that address program's needs, and continually evaluate compliance with program performance standards and progress towards achieving program goals.

Participation Targets

1. Provide salary supplements annually to 1800 infant and/or toddler teachers across North Carolina.

Expected Outcomes

1. Increased ability for licensed child care programs to sustain and attract a diverse highly educated workforce.
2. Increased number of licensed child care programs with full time infant and toddler teachers with at least 16 semester hours in early childhood development from an accredited college or university.

3. Reduce the infant and toddler teacher turnover rate to under 20% among teachers receiving salary supplements.

Suggested Timeline of Outputs:

Program Planning	August 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022 (optional)
Program Implementation	January 1, 2023 - July 31, 2025
Evaluation/Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct quarterly programmatic update meeting with DCDEE staff.• Complete quarterly reports to be submitted to the contract administrator January 30, 2023, 2024, and 2025.• Conduct an Annual Program Evaluation by July 31, 2023, and 2024.
Final Report	Summarize overall effect of the intervention to include an analysis of the expected program outcomes due July 31, 2025.

IV. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. **Reports** – Provide data as requested by Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) to meet federal reporting requirements. This includes submitting monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting by the deadlines provided by DCDEE in order to meet any submission date required from the federal funder.
2. **Feedback** – Providing feedback at least monthly to DCDEE is required throughout the duration of the grant to contribute to continuous quality improvement and monitor ongoing processes and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project.

V. APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS AND CAPACITY

Applicants must exhibit comprehensive knowledge of early childhood education (ECE) systems, effective policies, and practices at all levels of the ECE infrastructure, a demonstrated ability to develop and execute equity focused projects, and program design and evaluation expertise. Also experience in compensation/incentive planning and design, as well as human resource solutions.

Applicants must demonstrate their capacity to manage Federal/State grant funds and programs at an intensive level in collaboration with multiple partners through satisfactory audit reports; education, experience, and expertise of key personnel; and demonstrated support for the proposal from the applicant's organization.

Lastly, applicants must demonstrate and provide examples of their capacity to provide services to diverse populations, collaborate with vested stakeholders, and work effectively with various state and local agencies.

Preference will be given to applicants that have incorporated a racial equity lens into their practices.

VI. LINE-ITEM BUDGET & NARRATIVE

The applicant will submit three line-item budgets for the work the applicant anticipates completing during each of the following time periods: August 1, 2022 - July 31, 2023, August 1, 2023 - July 31, 2024, and August 1, 2024 - July 31, 2025. The budgets must address the cost to complete deliverables outlined in this RFA. A narrative justification must be included for every expense listed in the budgets. Each justification should show how the amount on the line-item budget was calculated, and it should be clear how the expense relates to the project's activities. The total for each budget may not exceed \$4,000,000 per year.

Travel Reimbursement Rates

Mileage reimbursement rates must be based on rates determined by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM). Because mileage rates fluctuate with the price of fuel, the OSBM will release the "Change in IRS Mileage Rate" memorandum to be found on OSBM's website when there is a change in this rate.

For other travel related expenses, please refer to the current rates for travel and lodging reimbursement presented in the chart below. However, please be advised that reimbursement rates periodically change. DCDEE will only reimburse for rates authorized in OSBM's North Carolina Budget Manual or adopted by means of an OSBM Budget Memo. These documents are located here: <https://www.osbm.nc.gov/budget/budget-manual#Sect51>.

Current Rates for Travel and Lodging

Meals	In State	Out of State
Breakfast	\$9.00	\$9.00
Lunch	\$11.80	\$11.80
Dinner	\$20.50	\$23.30
Lodging (<i>Maximum rate per person, excludes taxes and fees</i>)	\$78.90	\$93.20
Total Travel Allowance Per Day	\$120.20	\$137.30
Mileage	\$0.585 cents per mile	

VII. APPLICATION CONTENT & FORMAT

The submitted electronic application must be formatted to print on 8.5 x 11-inch paper with margins of 1 inch, except for the spreadsheets used in the budget template. Line spacing should be single-spaced. Use Calibri or Times New Roman font only and no smaller than an 11-point font. All proposals must include the following (** indicates form included in RFA posting*).

1. **Application Checklist***: Summarizes the application components to be submitted.
2. **Application Face Sheet***: Requires electronic or scanned signature of authorized authority.
3. **Proposal Summary**: Provides a brief (3-5 paragraphs) description of the activities the applicant proposes to implement.
4. **Introduction to the Applicant Organization/Applicant Qualifications**: Provides a 1-3-page introduction to the applicant's organization, including:
 - a. The organization's mission, history, and goals.
 - b. Qualifications, experience, and expertise of key personnel to be assigned to this initiative including up to three work samples.
 - c. The organization's experience in the content area specified in the application.
5. **Proposal Design, Timeline & Strategies**: Provide a 5-7-page narrative describing the proposed project design and the activities/tasks as described in Section III that will be accomplished with the available resources. Include as part of the scope of services the major tasks, deliverables, and anticipated dates of completion. Identify the key personnel responsible for each task by position.
6. **Collaborative Partners or Subcontractors**: Provide a 1-3-page narrative describing any collaborative partners or subcontractors the applicant plans to work with in the development of a salary supplement program for infant and toddler teachers. Include partner or subcontractor name, address, and nonprofit or for-profit status. Explain the contributions each partner or subcontractor will make toward this project including resources. Attach copies of support letters from collaborative partners or subcontractors, if applicable. Requested attachments will not count toward the applicant's page limitations.
7. **Line-Item Budget*, Detailed Budget Narrative, and FTE Sheet***: Complete and submit three proposed line-item budgets according to the format provided with this RFA. The budgets shall reflect the funding needed for the periods of August 1, 2022- July 31, 2023, August 1, 2023- July 31, 2024, and August 1, 2024- July 31, 2025, and not to exceed \$4,000,000 per year. Also complete a proposed budget narrative that explains in detail

all line items in the budget worksheet in accordance with the “DCDEE Line-Item Budget & Narrative Instructions.” The FTE worksheet is also required as part of this RFA. Please complete the FTE sheet first so that the line-item budget will populate Salary/Fringe values in Column C.

VIII. SELECTION PROCESS

The following is a general description of the process for selecting applications for funding for this initiative. A selection committee chosen by DCDEE will review each application submitted. Upon review of each application, the selection committee will assign a numerical rating based on the following:

1. **Proposal Summary** (Maximum of **10** points):
Response must reflect the applicant's understanding of and responsiveness to the Scope of Services described in Section III.
2. **Leadership Capacity** (Maximum of **20** points):
Response must reflect the applicant has the leadership capacity to effectively manage the proposed activity. The applicant must also demonstrate their capacity to serve as a subject matter expert on the given content area. Qualifications of key personnel must meet the applicant qualifications and capacity described in Section IV. Application includes a description of the key persons who will lead the initiative, including names, agency titles, and the activities for which each person will be responsible. Collaborative partners or subcontractors, if used, should be qualified and have the capacity to provide the services specified. The narrative must include the name of any proposed subcontractors, the organization affiliation, any links to sites which might verify the subcontractor's expertise or capacity to provide the selected services, and the activities for which the sub-contractor will be responsible. If a subcontractor will be identified during the planning process, the applicant must provide a detailed plan of the process to obtain one and the qualifications sought.
3. **Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion and Equity:** (Maximum of **10** points):
Recognizing child outcomes vary disproportionately across race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, physical and developmental ability, and geography, the proposal must clearly demonstrate the applicant's ability to design and implement culturally responsive programming. To ensure the program that is developed is representative of and responsive to diverse identities of North Carolina families, the services provided by this contract (as well evidence of past work) shall include a focus of employing a diversity, equity, and inclusion framework in project development and execution.
4. **Initiative Design, Timeline & Strategies** (Maximum of **30** points):
Response must reflect an innovative design and methodology that will result in increased supports for the early care and education workforce and infrastructure as described in Section III. Timeline should be complete, logical, and realistic for the tasks proposed.

5. **Evaluation Plan:** (Maximum of **15** points):

Plan must reflect appropriate strategies for regularly assessing the achievement of interim and final outputs and outcomes for the project. A theory of change and logic model are highly encouraged. Applicant must also show evidence of the ability to anticipate and adjust for challenges that may arise throughout the evaluation process. Lastly, the applicant must identify program evaluation partners and the plan for engaging them during the planning phase. The partners can be anyone who will support program evaluation planning and implementation. They may be individuals or organizations with research and evaluation expertise, evaluation design, analysis and/or reporting; stakeholders with a vested interest in the proposed activity, such as advocacy organizations or families.

6. **Line Item Budget*, Detailed Budget Narrative and FTE Sheet*:** (Maximum of **15** points):

Budget must reflect efficient and effective use of financial resources. The proposal must not exceed the total budget allotted and must follow all stipulations included in the budget worksheet and narrative instructions. The plan must provide a clear and reasonable justification for all proposed expenditures. If funding will be used for conference presentations, include the proposed conferences and the amount of funding which will be needed for those conferences.

Points can be added or reduced in any section for overall proper grammar usage and organization of the proposal.

Maximum Points: 100

Any attachments must further demonstrate the applicant's capacity to fulfill the requirements for this project as described. Attachments will not count against the applicant's page limitations. The selection committee will submit recommendations to DCDEE based on the selection process described. The Division of Child Development and Early Education will make a final selection and notify all applicants of that selection in writing and/or electronically no later than **5:00 pm on May 13, 2022**.

IX. APPLICATION PROCUREMENT PROCESS

1. Written questions concerning the RFA specifications will be received until the date specified on the cover sheet. A summary of all questions and answers will be posted to DCDEE's website (<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Whats-New>) by **February 25, 2022**.
2. **An electronic submission** of the application must be received from each agency or organization. The submission must include an application face sheet with an electronic or scanned signature by an official authorized to bind the agency or organization in a legal contract.
3. All applications must be received by DCDEE via email no later than the date and time

specified on the cover sheet of the RFA. **Paper copies or faxed applications will not be accepted.**

4. The date and time of application receipt will be documented by the date and time shown on the email submission received via DCDEE.Contracts.Unit.RFA@dhhs.nc.gov. Budgets and budget narratives are to be included as part of the application submitted.
5. The RFA evaluation team may request additional information from any or all applicants for clarification or to support the materials presented in any part of the application. However, agencies and organizations are cautioned that the evaluation team is not required to request clarification; therefore, all applications should be complete and reflect the most favorable terms available from the agency or organization.
6. Applications will be evaluated according to completeness, content, and applicant's documented experience with similar projects, apparent ability of the agencies or organization's staff and cost. The award of a grant to one agency and organization does not mean that the other applications lacked merit but that, all facts considered, the selected application was deemed to provide the best service to the State.
7. Agencies and organizations are cautioned that this is a request for applications, and the funding agency reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all applications when such rejections are deemed to be in the best interest of the funding agency.
8. **Application Process Summary Dates**
 - 02/14/2022: Request for Applications issued
 - 02/15/2022: Bidder's Conference
 - 02/23/2022: Interested applications submit optional Notice of Intent no later than 5 pm
 - 02/23/2022: All questions due via email no later than 5 pm
 - 02/25/2022: Answers to Questions posted to the DCDEE website no later than 5 pm
 - 03/25/2022: Applications must be received via email no later than 5 pm
 - 05/13/2022: Successful applicant will be notified
 - 08/01/2022: Estimated contract start date.

X. GENERAL INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

1. Award or Rejection

All complete and timely submitted applications will be evaluated and awards will be made to that agencies or organizations whose combination of budget and service capabilities are deemed to be in the best interest of the funding agency. The funding agency reserves the unqualified right to reject any or all offers if determined to be in its best interest. The successful applicant will be notified by **May 13, 2022**.

2. Cost of Application Preparation

Any cost incurred by an agency or organization in preparing or submitting an application is the agency or organization's sole responsibility; the funding agency will not reimburse any agency or organization for any pre-award costs incurred.

3. Elaborate Applications

Elaborate applications in the form of brochures or other presentations beyond what is necessary to present a complete and effective application are not desired.

4. Oral Explanations

The funding agency will not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the competitive process or after awarding the grant.

5. Reference to Other Data

Only information that is received in response to this RFA will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted will not be considered.

6. Titles

Titles and headings in this RFA are for convenience only and shall have no binding force or effect.

7. Form of Application

Each application must be submitted utilizing the forms provided by DCDEE, and upon award, these forms will be incorporated into the funding agency's Performance Agreement (contract).

8. Exceptions

All applications are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. All responses will be controlled by such terms and conditions. The attachment of other terms and conditions by any agency or organization may be grounds for rejection of that agency or organization's application.

9. Advertising

In submitting its application, agencies and organizations agree not to use the results of the selection process as part of any news release or commercial advertising without prior written approval of DCDEE.

10. Right to Submitted Material

All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFA, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the agency or organization will become the property of the funding agency when received.

11. Competitive Offer

Pursuant to the provision of N.C.G.S. 143-54, and under penalty of perjury, the signer of

any application submitted in response to this RFA thereby certifies that this application has not been arrived at collusively or otherwise in violation of either Federal or North Carolina antitrust laws.

12. Agency and Organization's Representative

Each agency or organization shall submit with its application the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the agency or organization and answer questions regarding the application.

13. Subcontracting

Agencies and organizations may propose to subcontract portions of work provided that their applications clearly indicate the scope of the work to be subcontracted, and to whom.

14. Proprietary Information

Trade secrets or similar proprietary data which the agency or organization does not wish disclosed to other than personnel involved in the evaluation will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by NCAC TO1: 05B.1501 and G.S. 132-1.3 if identified as follows: Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL." Any section of the application that is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in boldface on the title page of that section.

15. Participation Encouraged

Pursuant to Article 3 and 3C, Chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statutes and Executive Order No. 77, the funding agency invites and encourages participation in this RFA by businesses owned by minorities, women and the disabled including utilization as subcontractor(s) to perform functions under this Request for Applications.

16. Gifts Ban

N.C.G.S. 133-32 and Executive Order 24 prohibit the offer to or acceptance by any State Employee of any gift from anyone with a contract with the State, or from any person seeking to do business with the State. By execution of any response to this request, agencies and organizations attest, for the entire organization and its employees or agents, that no such gift has been offered, accepted, or promised by any employees of the organization.

17. Contract/Funds Disbursement

DCDEE will issue a contract to the recipients of the grant that will include their application. Expenditures may begin upon receipt of a fully executed contract and not before that point. To receive compensation, following contract submission and agreement, the selected applicants must submit a monthly reimbursement request to the Division for all expenses incurred.

18. Audit

Please be advised that successful applicants may be required to have an audit in

accordance with N.C.G.S. 143C-6-22 and N.C.G.S. 143C-6-23 as applicable to the agency's status.

There are 3 reporting levels which are determined by the total direct grant receipts from all State agencies in the entity's fiscal year:

Level 1: Less than \$25,000

Level 2: At least \$25,000 but less than \$500,000

Level 3: \$500,000 or more. Level 3 grantees are required to submit a "Yellow Book" audit done by a CPA.

Only Level 3 grantees may include audit expenses on the budget. Audit expenses should be prorated based on the ratio of the grant to the total pass-through funds received by the entity.

19. Additional Documentation to Include with Application

All applicants are required to include documentation of their tax identification number. Those applicants which are private nonprofit agencies are to include a copy of an IRS determination letter regarding the agency's 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. (This letter normally includes the agency's tax identification number, so it would also satisfy that documentation requirement.)

20. Federal Certifications

Agencies or organizations receiving federal funds are required to execute Federal certifications regarding non-discrimination, Drug-Free Workplace, Environmental Tobacco Smoke, Debarment, Lobbying, and Lobbying Activities.

21. System for Award Management Database (SAM)

All grantees receiving federal funds must be actively registered in the federal government's System for Award Management (SAM) database or be willing to complete the registration process in conjunction with the award (see www.sam.gov). To maintain an active SAM record, the record must be updated no less than annually.

22. Additional Documentation Prior to Contract Execution

Contracts will require additional documentation prior to contract execution. After the award announcement, agencies will be contacted about providing the following documentation:

- a. A completed and signed letter from the agency's Board President/Chairperson identifying individuals authorized to sign contracts.
- b. A completed and signed letter from the agency's Board President/Chairperson identifying individuals authorized to sign expenditure reports.
- c. Documentation of the agency's DUNS number. Documentation consists of a copy of communication (such as a letter or email correspondence) from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) which indicates the agency or organization's legal name, address, and DUNS

number. In lieu of a document from D&B, a copy of the agency or organization's SAM record is acceptable.

- d. If your agency does not have a DUNS number, please use the D&B online registration (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) to receive one free of charge. (DUNS is the acronym for the Data Universal Numbering System developed and regulated by D&B.)
- e. Contracts with private non-profit agencies require additional documentation prior to contract execution. After the award announcement, private non-profit agencies will be contacted about providing the following documentation:
 - i. A completed, signed, and notarized statement which includes the agency's Conflict of Interest Policy.
 - ii. A completed, signed, and notarized page certifying that the agency has no overdue tax debts.
- f. All grantees receiving funds through the State of North Carolina are required to execute Contractor Certifications Required by North Carolina Law. Contractor Certifications should **NOT** be generated, signed or returned with application.

Note: At the start of each calendar year, all agencies with current DCDEE contracts are required to update their contract documentation. These agencies will be contacted a few weeks prior to the due date and will be provided the necessary forms and instructions.

23. Registration with Secretary of State

Private non-profit applicants must also be registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State to do business in North Carolina or be willing to complete the registration process in conjunction with the execution of the contract documents. (See www.secretary.state.nc.us/corporations.)

24. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Data Reporting Requirement

The Contractor shall complete and submit to the Division, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Data Reporting Requirement form within 10 State Business Days when awarded \$25,000 or more in federal funds.

25. Salary Limitation

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$189,600. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.

The Appropriations Act of 2017 (N.C. Session Law 2017-57), which was adopted by reference in 2019 budget legislation, SECTION 6.4 limits the State funds used for the annual salary of any individual employee of a nonprofit organization to \$120,000.

Per the statute *“No more than one hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000) in State funds, including any interest earnings accruing from those funds, may be used for the annual salary of any individual employee of a nonprofit organization.*

- *The term “State funds” is defined by law in N.C.G.S. 143C-1-1(d)(25): Any moneys including federal funds deposited in the State treasury except moneys deposited in a trust fund or agency fund as described in G.S. 143C-1-3.*
- *HHSAR 331.101.70(b) Part 353: The salary rate limitation does not restrict the salary that an organization may pay an individual working under a Department of Health and Human 20 Services contract or order; it merely limits the portion of that salary that may be paid with contract funds.*
- *The salary cap is for a 12-month period. That means that the cap amount is reduced for the 9-month academic period or 3 months contract period.*
- *The cap is for a 1.0 FTE. That means the cap is proportionally reduced for a .75 or .50 FTE.”*

XI. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

The following items must be included in the application. Please assemble the application in the following order in the format identified in Section VII on page 12:

- ☐ Application Checklist – Item 1
- ☐ Application Face Sheet – Item 2
- ☐ Proposal Summary/Design/Evaluation Plan – Item 3
- ☐ List of Subcontractors – Item 4
- ☐ Line-Item Budget & FTE Worksheet – Item 5
- ☐ Indirect Cost Rate Approval Letter (if applicable)
- ☐ Letters of Commitment or Statements of Support – Item 6
- ☐ IRS Tax Status Documentation – Item 7
 - a. IRS letter documenting your organization’s tax identification number
 - OR
 - b. IRS determination letter regarding your organization’s 501(c)(3) tax exempt status for private nonprofits